

Recent CALFED Program Refinements

June 23, 1999

- There is more emphasis on CALFED's four comprehensive strategies for solving problems related to ecosystem restoration, water quality, water supply reliability, and levee system integrity. As a result, the program elements are better integrated.
- The specific plans for the ecosystem restoration, water quality, levees, watersheds, and water use efficiency program elements have been refined and more specificity has been added regarding proposed actions, particularly for Stage 1a, the first two years of the program.
- The Stage 1a actions have been grouped into seven bundles, based mainly on geography, to better link program elements and provide for cohesive packages for permitting purposes.
- The drinking water quality improvement strategy is more refined than in December 1998, better describing how improvements will be achieved and future decisions will be made.
- There is a specific proposed approach and set of actions for South Delta Improvements. These improvements are critical to improving flexibility in the system and represent a breakthrough in an area of inter-agency conflict since 1982.
- The report contains a detailed introduction to CALFED's Water Management Strategy. This includes CALFED's goals for water supply reliability and is the first real integration of the various water management actions into a comprehensive strategy.
- The Water Management Strategy includes a description of CALFED's Integrated Storage Investigation which was first developed in February 1999.
- The focus for groundwater development has changed to emphasize local development of projects using CALFED support and has expanded to include Southern California. A solicitation of interest this year resulted in identification of 25 potential projects.
- The report includes a discussion of how the Water Management Strategy can be implemented early in Stage 1 to provide an Environmental Water Account. There has been substantial effort put into "gaming" or making an EWA work using real time scenarios with participants from fisheries management and water operations. Data have been developed which have shown the utility of an EWA.
- There is an introduction to CALFED work on Program governance, both interim and long-term, and on financing the Program. These are coupled with the Stage 1a actions in CALFED's draft Implementation Plan.
- There is a description of CALFED's draft Multi-species Conservation Strategy. The Strategy is a new document which describes how ESA assurances can and will be developed for program actions.